

Assembly Bill No. 70

Passed the Assembly September 14, 2001

Chief Clerk of the Assembly

Passed the Senate September 13, 2001

Secretary of the Senate

This bill was received by the Governor this _____ day of
_____, 2001, at _____ o'clock __M.

Private Secretary of the Governor

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CHAPTER _____

An act to add Article 5.7 (commencing with Section 8590) to Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code, relating to fire safety, making an appropriation therefor, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 70, Wright. Firefighting equipment.

Existing law authorizes the Office of Emergency Services to acquire new or used firefighting apparatus and equipment for resale to local agencies and to provide other assistance to agencies for the acquisition of firefighting apparatus and equipment.

This bill would establish in the office the thermal imaging equipment purchasing program and require the office to acquire firefighting thermal imaging equipment on behalf of local and state agencies that provide fire suppression services and are interested in obtaining this equipment. The bill would authorize the director of the office to, among other things, purchase thermal imaging equipment at the lowest possible price from a reliable vendor that meets specified requirements. The bill would require any participating local agency to pay $\frac{1}{2}$ of the price of equipment purchased on its behalf by the state.

This bill would appropriate \$50,000 from the General Fund to the office for the thermal imaging equipment purchasing program. It would require the director to seek funding from the private sector, grant programs, and other appropriate sources.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

Appropriation: yes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) Firefighters every day risk their lives and should be equipped with the best available equipment that can reduce their risk of harm when fighting fires and increase the survival rate of fire victims.



(b) Thermal imaging technology and equipment now exist to increase firefighters' ability to work safely in a smoke-filled environment by allowing them to see and maneuver amidst smoke, locate the fire, and identify victims and other firefighters more quickly, thereby saving lives and money.

(c) Thermal imaging equipment is expensive, costing in the range of \$18,000 to \$25,000 per unit.

(d) A growing number of fire departments across the nation use thermal imaging equipment. The State of New Jersey has purchased a thermal imaging unit for each fire district in that state.

(e) It is the intent of the Legislature to create a state purchasing program to leverage the state's buying power to purchase thermal imaging equipment for firefighters throughout the State of California.

SEC. 2. Article 5.7 (commencing with Section 8590) is added to Chapter 7 of Division 1 of Title 2 of the Government Code, to read:

Article 5.7. Firefighting Thermal Imaging Equipment Act of 2001

8590. This article shall be known and may be cited as the Firefighting Thermal Imaging Equipment Act of 2001.

8590.1. As used in this article:

(a) "Director" means the Director of the Office of Emergency Services.

(b) "Local agency" means any city, county, city and county, fire district, special district, or joint powers agency that provides fire suppression services. "Local agency" also includes a fire company organized pursuant to Part 4 (commencing with Section 14825) of Division 12 of the Health and Safety Code.

(c) "Office" means the Office of Emergency Services.

(d) "State agency" means any state agency providing residential or institutional fire protection, including, but not limited to, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

8590.2. There is established in the office a thermal imaging equipment purchasing program under which the office shall acquire firefighting thermal imaging equipment on behalf of local and state agencies that are interested in obtaining this equipment.



8590.3. In administering the purchasing program, the director shall do all of the following:

(a) No later than 45 days after the effective date of this article, establish an advisory committee, which shall be comprised of representatives of organizations including, but not limited to, the California Fire Chiefs Association, the Fire Districts Association of California, the California Professional Firefighters, the CDF Firefighters, and the California State Firefighters Association, Inc. The committee shall meet no later than 30 days after all members are appointed.

(b) Consult with the advisory committee regarding equipment specifications and other matters relating to the acquisition of thermal imaging equipment, and require the advisory committee to formulate specifications no later than 120 days after its initial meeting.

(c) Notify all local and state agencies about the purchasing program, including the opportunity to purchase additional units at the contract price, and determine whether those agencies are interested in obtaining thermal imaging equipment.

(d) Purchase thermal imaging equipment at the lowest possible price from a reliable vendor that meets specified requirements. It is the intent of the Legislature that the director enter into a multiyear contract for this purpose no later than 180 days after the committee formulates specifications pursuant to subdivision (b).

(e) Include a provision in the vendor contract allowing any local or state agency to purchase additional units directly from the vendor at the contract price.

(f) Any local agency that elects to participate in the thermal imaging equipment purchasing program shall pay one-half of the contract price for each piece of equipment purchased on its behalf by the state.

8590.4. (a) The director shall seek funding for the program from the private sector, grant programs, and other appropriate sources.

(b) The director, after consultation with the advisory commission, shall distribute equipment purchased under the program in order to maximize its utilization by firefighters based on consideration of the following factors:

- (1) Ability to share or move the equipment to fire locations.
- (2) Availability of existing thermal imaging equipment.



(3) Geography.

(4) Need based on frequency of fires.

SEC. 3. The sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the Office of Emergency Services for the purpose of funding the thermal imaging equipment purchasing program established pursuant to this act.

SEC. 4. This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

To ensure that firefighters throughout California are equipped with the best available equipment that can reduce their risk of harm when fighting fires and increase the survival rate of fire victims as soon as possible, it is necessary for this act to take effect immediately.



Approved _____, 2001

Governor

